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1 2 3	FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF DALLAS AMARILLO DIVISION		
4 5	et al, S Jointly Administered		
6	In re:		
7 8 9	2B Farms, a Texas General \$ Case No. 23-500096-rlj12 Partnership, et al, \$ Jointly Administered \$ Debtors \$		
10			
11	Services, Ag Texas PCA, § Il Thorlakson Diamond T §		
12		9	
13	S Edward Dufurrena, et al, S Adversary No.24-02007-rlj Intervenor-Plaintiffs, S Consolidated Adversary		
14			
15			
16	Defendants. §		
17			
18 19	First Bank & Trust, §		SV.
20	Defendant and §		
21	5		
22			
23	Partnership, Terry M.		
24		*	
25			
26	6 Third-Party § Counterclaim §		.e
27	§		
28	§		
30	HTLF Bank,		
31	and, as to Tabo §	DIT	
32	Third-Party.	BII	
33	JOHNNY EARP		
34	DECEMBER 6, 2024		

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           DEPOSITION OF JOHNNY EARP, produced as a witness at
      the instance of HTLF BANK as Successor to First Bank &
 2
 3
      Trust and duly sworn, was taken in the above-styled and
 4
      numbered cause on the 6th day of December, 2024, from
 5
      9:33 a.m. to 2:38 p.m., in person before Charles Walker,
 6
     CSR in and for the State of Texas, reported by machine
 7
     shorthand, at the law offices of McWhorter Cobb and
     Johnson, LLP, 1722 Broadway, Lubbock, Texas 79401,
 8
 9
     pursuant to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the
10
     provisions stated on the record or attached hereto.
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1	we can just to fill in a few things. I think from your	1	Q. And in fact, that's why Mr. Swan brought you in
2	prior testimony, as of last month you're officially	2	to oversee and help a few things related to the 2B Farms
3	retired?	3	or Bo Robinson loans; right?
4	A. Officially, yes.	4	A. He brought me in to look over what he had
5	Q. Congratulations.	5	completed to see if it would be what a what I would
6	A. November 15th.	6	see when I was only looking at a loan. I pointed out a
7	Q. Congratulations.	7	few things and I didn't know how he had it calculated
8	A. Yeah.	8	and he explained it to me, so yes.
9	Q. What did you do to prepare for this deposition	9	Q. You were not the loan officer for Bo Robinson;
0	today?	10	were you?
1	A. The - I reviewed the documents that I received	11	A. Never. Never was.
2	that I went over earlier today, the e-mails to Jason	12	Q. And where there was We say Bo Robinson or 2
3	Swann, basically, that kind of information.	13	Farms, can we understand we're talking about the same
4	Q. And this And I'm not asking what you talked	14	customer?
5	about, but did you have the opportunity to speak with	15	A. Same individual, yes.
6	Mr. Lovell or someone from his firm?	16	Q. You used a word earlier. I want to make sure.
7	A. On a brief, brief basis. No significant time.	17	You'd used the word credits when you were talking about
8	Q. And you're not represented by an attorney?	18	responsible for credits at the bank. Is that the same
9	A. I am here as a individual.	19	as customer?
0	Q. And are you here as representative of the bank	20	A. Customers, loans, loans or credits. That's the
1	as well?	21	way we refer to them.
2	A. Before they Before the merger Bank of	22	Q. And would you agree that bank officers need to
3	Heartland is in the middle of a merger between Heartland	23	use ordinary and reasonable care in handling the
4	and UMB, University or Missouri Bancshares, United	24	accounts?
25	Missouri Bancshares. They wanted someone to basically	25	A. Yes.
	62		6
		1	·-
1	Meg Killian, who is the attorney with the bank,	1	Q. And in fact you gave testimony about that
1 2	Meg Killian, who is the attorney with the bank, wanted someone to speak on behalf of the bank. I guess	1 2	
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1	Q. And then on down under Paragraph 7 there is a	1	Q. And the exceptions that goes up to seven
2	sub-paragraph c, Deposits; do you see that?	2	business days is if the deposit checks total more than
3	A. Yes, sir.	3	\$5,525; do you see that?
4	Q. Within that it references another document and	4	A. Yes, sir.
5	called the Regulation CC Funds Availability Disclosures?	5	Q. Now, in the Bo Robinson case and the exhibits
6	A. Yes, sir.	6	you looked at a moment ago and you referenced during the
7	Q. And that that is incorporated into the policies	7	month of February there was a series of checks; were
8	of the bank; correct?	.8	there not?
9	A. Correct.	9	A. Yes, sir.
.0	Q. And it relates to the availability of the	10	Q. And in those, all those checks were dealing
.1	deposited funds and when they're accredited to your	11	with significant numbers of multiple millions of
.2	account; is that right?	12	dollars; were they not?
.3	A. When they're Yes.	13	A. I believe all the checks were in excess of a
.4	Q. And just for reference, if you can turn to the		
.5	last two pages of Exhibit 70.	14	million dollars that I saw on the list.
.6	A. (Witness complies.) Okay.	15	Q. And so clearly those checks during that time
.7	Q. And does that appear to be a copy of the	16	period would have been more than the \$5,525 exceptions
. 8	Regulation CC Funds Ability Disclosure?	17	here; right?
.9	A. Yes, sir, that's the Available to Disclosure,	18	A. Yes, sir.
. 0		19	Q. So, in that case, under the bank's policy, it
	yes, sir.	20	should not have given immediate credit for those checks;
1	Q. Okay. And so this is again is a policy of the	21	is that right?
2	bank; correct?	22	A. That's right.
3	A. Correct.	23	MR. JOHN LOVELL: Objection, misstating the
24	Q. If we take a look at the first page where you	24	language of the document.
25	were of the dis I'm going to call it the Regulations	25	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) Did you understand
	82		
1	CC?	1	my question?
2	A. Yes, sir.	2	A. Sir, repeat.
3	Q. This is talking about how this document is	3	Q. If a check - If the check has been deposited
4	applicable to Heartland Financial, like you said;	4	for at least a million dollars, that is more than the
5	correct?	5	\$5,525 exception that's put forth on the FCC
6	A. Yes, sir.	6	regulations; correct?
7	Q. Under the first main paragraph, under Your	7	A. That is larger than the 5,025, yes.
8	Ability to Withdraw Funds at the member bank, does it	8	Q. And if that is the case the bank should impose
9	say our policy is to make funds from your cash and	9	a longer hold period before it gets credit, up to seven
. 0	checks deposits available to you on the first business	10	days?
1	day after the day we received your deposit?	11	MR. JOHN LOVELL: Objection, you misstated
.2	A. That's what this statement says, yes.	12	the language of the document.
.3	Q. So that's not the an instant credit	13	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) You can answer i
.4	A. No.	14	sir.
.5	Q. – customer; is it?	15	A. You can put a longer hold period. You may.
.6	A. No.	16	Q. And in this case do you know if the bank did?
.7	Q. It doesn't give immediate availability to the	17	A. I have no idea.
. 8	customer to take those funds; does it?	18	Q. Were you making any of those decisions?
.9	A. No.	19	A. No, sir.
20		20	
· U	Q. And if we move down, as it were, to		Q. The bank clearly had the ability to make that
	sub-paragraph it says longer delays may apply?	21	decision according to its own policy; correct?
1		22	 A. According to the policy, yes, you can put a
21	A. Yes, sir.	-	1. 11
21 22 23	Q. And then it gives examples of when additional	23	hold.
21 22 23 24 25		23 24 25	hold. Q. So whether it be Mr. Ragland, Mr. Garland, Mr. Swann, any of them could have done that; correct?

	105		10*
1	question. We're all talking about this at one time.	1	Q. And a significant amount of money, \$2.5 million
2	MR. JOHN LOVELL: I just want to make sure	2	
3	it's clear who's buying and who's actually doing the	3	A. Yes.
4	selling.	4	Q correct?
5	MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE: And I'm glad you	5	A. Yes.
6	clarified that. Thank you.	6	Q. Were you - The signature on the McClain Farm
7	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) Can you give your	7	Account on this first page again is Megan Goad; do you
8	testimony of what you believe the series of checks that	8	see that?
9	we're about to go over are concerning?	9	A. I see that, yes.
10	A. These checks that we're looking at represent	10	Q. Do you understand that to be Brian McClain's
11	the proceeds from sales of cattle that McClain Feed Yard	11	daughter?
12	sold that were Bo Robinson's cattle, from what I what	12	A. I do not know that. I know that his family
13	I understand.	13	worked in the business. That's all that I
14	Q. Up at the very top of the first page it says	14	understand.
15	"Refer to Maker". What does refer to maker mean to you?	15	Q. Were you aware that McClain would send multiple
16	A. I don't I don't see that. They were They	16	pre-signed blank checks to First Bank & Trust to use in
17	were only I have no idea what that is. I would guess	17	this in this cattle operations we've been discussing?
18	we're going to have to go It's referring it back to	18	A. Have no knowledge of that.
19	the bank.	19	Q. Would that be unusual?
20	Q. Back to Mechanics Bank?	20	A. It was quite unusual.
21	A. Back to Mechanics Bank probably because the	21	Q. Because McClain Farms Account, Inc. is not a
22	check wasn't any good. That's what I'm guessing, is	22	customer per se of the First Bank & Trust; is it not?
23	that they're sending it back.	23	A. They have no They are no customer of the
24	Q. And What you Common knowledge is when	24	bank that I'm aware of.
25	it's a returned check, bad check; is that right?	25	Q. And so if McClain Farms, Inc. is sending a
	106		101
1	A. Returned check.	1	pre-signed blank check to First Bank & Trust to hold in
2	Q. Does this appear to be a form that the back	2	a desk drawer, that's unusual; is it not?
3	office of First Bank & Trust is generating?	3	A. Very unusual. I mean, I wouldn't send any
4	A. This looks like something that It was not	4	forms like that. That just
	generated at the local branch, I can assure you that.		
~		1 5	() That's not normal?
5 6		5	Q. That's not normal?
6	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would	6	A. Normal course of business, no.
6 7	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank?	6 7	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the
6 7 8	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank?A. Of the bank, yes.	6 7 8	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That
6 7	 Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's 	6 7 8 9	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it?
6 7 8 9	 Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? 	6 7 8 9 10	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How
6 7 8 9 10	 Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. 	6 7 8 9 10	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know?
6 7 8 9 10 11	 Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement 	6 7 8 9 10 11 12	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employee
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6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	 Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement signature on that; is there? A. No. That's not uncommon. Q. As a general practice when a check is deposited 	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employe Rebecca Fernandez was filling out pre-signed checks for McClain Farms account and depositing them into the 2B Farms account?
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6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement signature on that; is there? A. No. That's not uncommon. Q. As a general practice when a check is deposited doesn't the customer endorse the check? A. Generally they do. There are occasions when a customer has a large amount of checks and there's times that the bank will stamp it like an endorsement and it's guaranteed like an endorsement missing. There's stamps that we would normally be put on. I don't know why	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employe Rebecca Fernandez was filling out pre-signed checks for McClain Farms account and depositing them into the 2E Farms account? A. No knowledge of that. Q. Do you have knowledge if Shawn Ragland knew about that? A. I have no knowledge of that, either. Q. Did, in any of your dealings with bank officers in talking about the McClain situation, did you discuss
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement signature on that; is there? A. No. That's not uncommon. Q. As a general practice when a check is deposited doesn't the customer endorse the check? A. Generally they do. There are occasions when a customer has a large amount of checks and there's times that the bank will stamp it like an endorsement and it's guaranteed like an endorsement missing. There's stamps that we would normally be put on. I don't know why there was no stamp on the check or no one endorsed the	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employee Rebecca Fernandez was filling out pre-signed checks for McClain Farms account and depositing them into the 2E Farms account? A. No knowledge of that. Q. Do you have knowledge if Shawn Ragland knew about that? A. I have no knowledge of that, either. Q. Did, in any of your dealings with bank officers in talking about the McClain situation, did you discuss that with any other bank officers?
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement signature on that; is there? A. No. That's not uncommon. Q. As a general practice when a check is deposited doesn't the customer endorse the check? A. Generally they do. There are occasions when a customer has a large amount of checks and there's times that the bank will stamp it like an endorsement and it's guaranteed like an endorsement missing. There's stamps that we would normally be put on. I don't know why there was no stamp on the check or no one endorsed the check. Can't speak to that. But I don't know why	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employee Rebecca Fernandez was filling out pre-signed checks for McClain Farms account and depositing them into the 2E Farms account? A. No knowledge of that. Q. Do you have knowledge if Shawn Ragland knew about that? A. I have no knowledge of that, either. Q. Did, in any of your dealings with bank officers in talking about the McClain situation, did you discuss that with any other bank officers? A. First I ever heard of that is today.
6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Q. So, is that When you say back office, would that be the back office of the bank? A. Of the bank, yes. Q. And then like on Page 2 of this exhibit, that's the back of this check; do you see that? A. Yes. Q. All right. And there's no endorsement signature on that; is there? A. No. That's not uncommon. Q. As a general practice when a check is deposited doesn't the customer endorse the check? A. Generally they do. There are occasions when a customer has a large amount of checks and there's times that the bank will stamp it like an endorsement and it's guaranteed like an endorsement missing. There's stamps that we would normally be put on. I don't know why there was no stamp on the check or no one endorsed the	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21	A. Normal course of business, no. Q. What about if the bank employee filled out the pay to the order of and the amount of the check? That would not be normal either; would it? A. That would not be normal. How would How would they know? Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust employee Rebecca Fernandez was filling out pre-signed checks for McClain Farms account and depositing them into the 2E Farms account? A. No knowledge of that. Q. Do you have knowledge if Shawn Ragland knew about that? A. I have no knowledge of that, either. Q. Did, in any of your dealings with bank officers in talking about the McClain situation, did you discuss that with any other bank officers?

27 (Pages 105 to 108)

	. 109		11
1	A. No.	1	MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE: I was waiting for
2	Q. So, what we can see, at least as to the first	2	that.
3	check on April the 4th of 2023 on Exhibit 73 is Bo	3	MR. JOHN LOVELL: You're welcome.
4	Robinson did not endorse it; correct?	4	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) And if we lool
5	A. That's correct.	5	through, without going through everything So we just
6	Q. It was deposited into the 2B Farms account;	6	went through the first check of April the 4th and then
7	correct?	7	if we go to Page 3 and 4, we see similar amount checks,
8	A. I don't know what his account number is, but if	8	\$2.5 million done on April the 5th, 2023; correct?
9	it that's	9	A. Yes, sir.
0	Q. I'll represent to you it is.	10	Q. And you see the same signatures and the same
1	A. Okay.	11	handwriting on both of those checks; right?
2	Q. Were you aware that First Bank & Trust was	12	A. I'm not a handwriting expert, but it looks
3	given immediate credit to 2B Farms accounts for these	13	similar to me.
4	checks?	14	Q. And again no endorsement; correct?
5	MR. JOHN LOVELL: Objection, misstates the	15	A. Correct.
6	facts.	16	Q. Then we go to the third check that was April
7	THE WITNESS: I have no knowledge as to how	17	the 6th of 2023 and a similar \$2.5 million amount;
8	the checks were availability of the funds of the	18	correct?
9	checks.	19	A. Yes.
0	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) Would it surprise	20	Q. And my same questions related to those, would
1	you if the bank made these funds immediately available?	21	your answer be the same?
2	A. In the normal course of business when we're	22	A. It would be the same, yes. All checks in this
3	dealing with reputable customers such as let's just say	23	series appear the same.
4	Cactus Feeders or Feed I mean, Packers, Packers,	24	Q. All right, that's the three. And then if you
25	checks that come in for cattle are typically made	25	go back to the next, where it looks like this
	110		11:
1	available the same day. That's all Let's just use	1	(indicating)?
2	cotton checks for PCCA. Those are Typically we do	2	A. Uh-huh.
3	not put holds on those deposits. But, it's common in ag	3	Q. You see this page right here?
4	lending that the our crop insurance checks or	4	MR. JOHN LOVELL: What check number.
5	whatever, we just typically do not put holds on those	5	MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE: Well, it's the same
6	checks.	6	check; it's just a double.
7	Q. Despite you had testified earlier today?	7	THE WITNESS: Same page.
8	A. The policy says we do. The lender has	8	MR. JOHN LOVELL: 7331?
9	discretion or the officer on the account has discretion.	9	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) From my looking a
0	And when you are dealing with people that you've done	10	it, it appears to be a page with the front and back,
1	business with for years, like Cargill or somebody like	11	just the same. They appear to be the same.
2	that that's you don't we don't typically hold the	12	A. Will, this is actually the same as the first
3	checks. I don't know what their relationship was there	13	check.
4	at the bank.	14	Q. That's what I'm saying; right?
5	Q. But what we do know is McClain Farms, Inc. did	15	A. Yes.
6	not have a direct customer relationship with the bank?	16	Q. Is it just that Is it in If you know, is
7	A. That's true.	17	it in an archive way the way First Bank & Trust produces
8	Q. Do you know if First Bank & Trust ever	18	it?
9	contacted Mechanics Bank to verify these funds?	19	A. It is a You can have the option to print the
0	A. Have no knowledge.	20	first page, then print the second page or you have the
1	Q. Have you seen any documents that suggest they	21	option where you get both front and back printed on one
2	did?	22	page.
3	A. No. Q. I haven't either.	23	Q. So. So, if I'm correct and if we look through
4		24	the three different checks, they are the same as the
24 25	MR. JOHN LOVELL: Objection to the comment.	25	first three we discussed earlier?

	125		12*
1	came up there.	1	entities; correct?
2	Q. Did Shawn go with you to Kentucky?	2	MR. DALLAS FLICK: This is Dallas Flick,
3	A. Shawn went with me to Kentucky, yes, sir.	3	objection to form.
4	Q. Do you have any knowledge about the actions Bo	4	THE WITNESS: I had no idea that there was
5	has taken to try to help secure funds for the bank?	5	even any checks there. But I suppose he had that
6	A. I have no knowledge of anything	6	ability, if he if he knew about it.
7	Q. You weren't involved in any of that?	7	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) And the same thing
8	A. I'm not involved in any of it.	8	with Rebecca Fernandez; correct?
9	Q. Basically, would you would you agree that	9	A. Now, like I say, I have no idea who was holding
.0	Shawn Ragland had the ability to oversee the Bo Robinson	10	checks for unsigned checks from anywhere. I don't
.1	and McClain transactions and do other other things to	11	know if Bo Robinson held the checks or anybody held the
2	protect the bank and Bo Robinson than what he did?	12	checks. I don't I didn't know there were any checks
3	MR. DALLAS FLICK: This is Dallas Flick,	13	out there.
4	objection to form.	14	Q. But if they were held by the bank in a drawer
.5	THE WITNESS: Did he have the ability?	15	and when invoices would come in Rebecca Fernandez would
.6	MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE: Yes.	16	open a drawer, put the check out, and fill it out?
.7	THE WITNESS: He had the As far as I	17	A. No. Because that's -
.8	know, Shawn had the ability to not give immediate credit	18	MR. DALLAS FLICK: This is Dallas Flick,
.9	to a deposit coming in and he did not have to wire the	19	object to the form.
0 9	funds out because there was basically no funds in the	20	THE WITNESS: The invoices would have been
21	account to wire out so he was wiring uncollected funds.	21	being paid with a wire. These were on cattle sales.
2	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) And they could have	22	These checks that were coming in were for cattle sales.
23	looked for an endorsement on the checks that were being	23	How do you know what cattle were being sold?
4	deposited?	24	Q. (BY MR. TIMOTHY PRIDMORE) And if they got th
25	A. Right. There was numerous things that could	25	paperwork for that?
	126		12
1	have been done.	1	A. If they received the paperwork for the sale of
2	Q. But they weren't; were they?	2	the cattle, it'd still have to be highly irregular.
3	A. The indication —		
-	71. The indication —	3	Q. Mr. Earp, I appreciate you. You've been
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